

Loudoun County Government Administrative Policies and Procedures		
Title: Loudoun County Transit Bus Use Policy	Effective Date: March 4, 2013	
Number:	Date Last Reviewed/Revised: March 4, 2013	
	Date of Next Review:	

Purpose:

To establish rules, guidelines and procedures regulating the use of Loudoun County Transit Buses, which includes Commuter Buses, Tysons Express and any future County managed transit bus services, which help provide for a safer and enjoyable service environment.

Overall Rules and Policy Guidelines:

This Loudoun County Transit Bus Use Policy is established by the County Administrator under general authority granted by the Board of Supervisors.

The following apply while on a Loudoun County Transit Bus ("Bus") or in a Park & Ride lot or at a Bus Stop:

1. It is prohibited to use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or possess an open receptacle containing an alcoholic beverage.
2. It is prohibited to deposit trash anywhere but in a receptacle. If there is no receptacle, take the trash with you.
3. It is prohibited to obstruct the access of individuals or vehicles to a Bus Stop, Park & Ride lot or Bus.
4. It is prohibited to use abusive, threatening or obscene language, or shout, make a loud noise, or play an electronic device (ex. MP3 player, Game Player, Computer, etc.) without earphones. Volume must be at a level so as not to disturb other passengers.
5. Smoking is prohibited on Buses or while in line at Park & Ride lots or Bus Stops. Further, it is prohibited to light matches or engage in activity that causes the release of fumes, dust, or smoke.
6. It is prohibited to gamble, solicit money or services, sell or take orders for merchandise or services.

7. Other than County approved and provided advertisements, notices and information, the posting of advertisements, order forms, flyers or any other materials on Buses or at Park & Ride lots or Bus Stops is prohibited.
8. With the exception of a service animal, animals are prohibited on the Bus.
9. It is prohibited to inappropriately touch, or to harass, threaten or intimidate another by words or actions.
10. It is prohibited to bring a concealed firearm onto a Park & Ride lot, Bus Stop or on a Bus, unless in possession of a valid permit to do so under the Code of Virginia or Federal law. Any other weapon not classified as a firearm may not be brought onto a Park & Ride lot or a Bus or at a Bus Stop.
11. It is prohibited to engage in disruptive behavior such as extreme, excessive or repeated behavior that significantly and adversely impairs the ability of a County employee or County Contractor to perform his/her work in an efficient and effective manner, or behavior that significantly and adversely impacts the ability for riders, residents, business-owners, and/or visitors to receive and/or use the Bus services in a friendly, courteous, safe and business-like manner.
12. All riders are required to pay the published fare when boarding the Bus. One child five years old or younger may ride free when accompanied by a paying adult. The child who rides free may be required to relinquish their seat if there are standees on the bus. Children five years old and younger may not stand on the Bus.
13. Only limited snacking is permitted.
14. For those Buses with reclining seat backs, seat backs must remain in their full upright position until the Bus has left its last boarding location of the morning or afternoon. Once the Bus has departed its last boarding location, passengers may carefully recline their seatbacks after politely notifying the passenger sitting behind them. The personal space of other passengers is to be respected.
15. Carry-on items are permitted if placed in the overhead luggage compartments, beneath the seat in front of you or on your lap. No item may be stored in the aisle or on a seat. The Bus operator is not permitted to open the underneath compartments to store luggage or parcels for passengers.
16. When using cell phones one must use a silent mode or low volume ring tone and keep calls brief (less than five minutes). One must speak quietly when using a cell phone or when conversing with other passengers.

Any person found to be in violation of these rules or engaging in any of the prohibited conduct may be removed from a Bus or Park & Ride lot or Bus Stop. Refusal to leave may, among other things, subject the violator to be banned from

the use of the Bus services and possibly arrested and prosecuted for criminal trespass.

In the event that Riders experience or witness behavior that is physically threatening, abusive, illegal, intimidating, or would otherwise require the immediate presence of law enforcement, the Rider should call 9-1-1.

Passenger Information:

1. Loudoun County Office of Transportation Services office hours are from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday, except for County Holidays. Before and after normal County business hours, passengers may call the Dispatch Office at 443-506-9499, or at another designated phone number, to check on the status of a Commuter Bus. This phone number should be used only when a Commuter Bus is at least 15 minutes late and an LC Alert has not been received by the rider.
2. Loudoun County Transit communicates with passengers through an e-mail notification system and real-time text messaging. These systems provide updates on future schedules, Park & Ride adjustments, and unanticipated service disruptions. Registration information is available on the Loudoun County government website (www.loudoun.gov/bus).
3. Loudoun County Office of Transportation Services utilizes an inclement weather/early dismissal schedule when severe weather, difficult road conditions or unforeseen circumstances can interrupt Bus service. This schedule is available on the Loudoun County government website (www.loudoun.gov/bus). Notices of when the schedules are in effect will be provided by a recorded telephone message at 703-771-5665 and may be displayed on local television and radio stations.
4. Scheduled arrival and departure times are subject to traffic conditions. Once the door closes and the Bus begins to depart the stop, the operator will not open the door for late arriving passengers. Be at the stop at least five minutes early. Bus operators are not permitted to pick up or drop off passengers other than at designated stops. In certain areas, it is illegal for the Bus to wait along curbs/sidewalks. Buses may arrive ahead of scheduled departure times if the passenger load or traffic is light.
5. The Buses accept two forms of fare payment: SmarTrip card or cash. Published fare is required. No change is provided. If filling a SmarTrip Card, the currency denominations accepted on the Buses are \$1, \$5, \$10,\$20.
6. The temperature on the Buses is set at 68 degrees. Inform the operator if you are experiencing extreme cold or hot conditions in your part of the bus. He/she may not be aware if there is an issue with the temperature in the rear of the bus. Remember every individual interprets being hot and cold differently, so riders may wish to carry a sweater or jacket.

7. Lost and found items left on a Bus are turned over to County Staff as soon as possible. Passengers may call or email the County to check on the status of a lost item at 703-771-5665 or rideshare@loudoun.gov. Items unclaimed after 30 days will be donated to charity.
8. Loudoun County Transit Buses comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Each Bus is equipped with a wheelchair lift and appropriate seating for up to two wheelchairs. Buses also have kneeling capability that enables passengers to board at curb level.
9. The Priority Seating Policy is fully compliant with the Federal Transportation Act (FTA) and Department of Transportation (DOT) regulation **49 CFR §37.167(j)** for Priority Seating. Priority seats are designated as the seats in the front row, as well as the seats marked with a handicap sticker. The seats identified with the handicap sticker are located about midway on the Commuter Bus and are seats that may have to be moved should a wheelchair passenger need to be transported.

Regulation **49 CFR §37.167(j)** states that bus operators (drivers) must ask individuals in priority seating areas or wheelchair securement areas to move if a person with a disability needs that space. Persons with disabilities and elderly persons are excluded from this request. The Bus operator is not required to enforce the request.

10. Bicycles on Buses. For security reasons, bus Passengers who want to put a bicycle in the underneath luggage compartment must provide a completed "Bike on Bus" registration card to the County. Cards are located on the Loudoun County government website at www.loudoun.gov/bus. For the specific bus stop locations where bicycles can be placed on the Buses, please visit www.loudoun.gov/bus.
11. Commuter Connections provides the Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program. The GRH program is designed to provide alternative transportation to get transit riders home from work in the event of an unexpected family emergency or unscheduled overtime. GRH is an incentive for bus riders and commuters to use carpooling, vanpooling, transit, or bicycling rather than driving alone. The program provides a safety net and assurance that an individual can get home and not be stranded at work if any unexpected situation arises. Call 1-800-745-RIDE or visit www.commuterconnections.org to register or to review the guidelines. This program is provided by the Council of Governments (COG).

For more information or with questions, comments or concerns, please contact Loudoun County Transit Bus services at 703-771-5665 or rideshare@loudoun.gov

Use of Loudoun County Transit Bus Services:

Equal Access:

This policy shall apply to all groups and individuals that seek to use the Loudoun County Transit Bus services. No group or individual shall be excluded from equal access to Loudoun County Transit Bus services because of considerations of race, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, political affiliation or any other basis prohibited by law. However, use may be denied or terminated if there is a violation of the rules set forth in this policy and/or if the use poses health, safety or general welfare risks.

Denial of Usage:

The County reserves the right to deny use if an individual is in violation of the rules set forth in this policy or if the individual poses health, safety or general welfare risks.

Removal and Ban:

Any person found not to be in compliance with the Loudoun County Transit Bus Use Policy may be asked to leave the Bus or Park & Ride lot, or Bus Stop or may be prohibited from boarding the Bus or using the Park & Ride lots at the time of the incident and/or in the future.

Banning an Individual for Non-Compliance:

County Staff and the County's Contractor (including operators/drivers) have the authority to request any individual who is acting in a manner contrary to this policy to immediately stop this behavior. If the behavior does not stop, they have the authority to request the individual to leave the Bus or Park & Ride lot or Bus Stop or deny boarding.

The County Administrator has the authority to ban an individual who is in non-conformance of the policy to protect the health, safety and general welfare of citizens of Loudoun County and riders of Loudoun County Transit Commuter Buses. If an individual wishes to appeal their ban, the individual has the right to contact the County's Facility Ban Appeals Officer by calling the Office of the County Administrator at 703-777-0200 to discuss or contest his/her ban. After investigation into the facts of the incident and discussion with involved parties (including the County Administrator), the Appeals Officer may modify or rescind the ban or keep the ban in place.

During the pendency of the ban and pursuant to §18.2-160.2 of the Code of Virginia, "Any person who enters or remains upon or within a vehicle operated by a public transportation service without the permission of, or after having been forbidden to do so by, the owner, lessee, or authorized operator thereof is guilty of a Class 4 misdemeanor." If a banned individual returns to the Commuter Buses or Park & Ride lots, the individual will be reported to the Sheriff's Office.

Responsible Departments:

County Administration and Office of Transportation Services